



Thank you for teaching about the watershed! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at our office or by phone.

## Migration headache

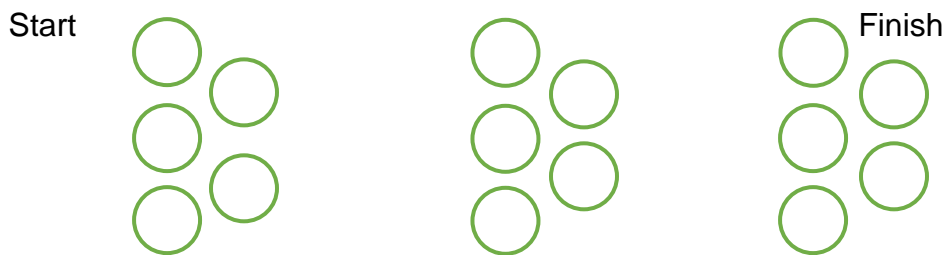
*The goal of this game is to teach students why wetlands are important to migratory bird populations, and how humans can have a huge effect on the health of these environments.*

*Duration: 10-15 minutes*

*Preparation:*

- 12-15 hula hoops
- Hoops can be substituted with ropes, string, newspaper, etc.

Lay out the hula hoops in a line, in 3 groups. These groups represent a) summer habitat; b) rest stops and; c) wintering grounds. Each hula hoop is a nest. Should look like this:



The number of students allowed per hula hoop will depend on how many students you have playing. More hoops allows for a better game. Ideally no more than 4 per hoop, but all the students need to be able to fit into one group at the start of the game. If needed, eliminate the rest stop group, and just have summer and winter habitats to allow for more hoops in each.

Ask the students if they know what migration is. If they don't, explain that it means spending the summer in one area and going somewhere else for the winter. Ask if they know of any animals that migrate. They will probably say bears, they often confuse migration and hibernation. Hopefully they will say ducks!

Explain that in this game, they are the ducks, hula hoops are nests in wetlands, and they are going to migrate. Since it is summer and we are in Canada, they will start up north in the summer habitat. When you yell MIGRATE they all have to run to a nest in the next section. Explain that these rest stops are vital to migrating birds, who need somewhere to stop, rest, and feed while they make their way south for the winter. Have them migrate again to the south, then come back through the rest stops and to the north again. Now we start eliminating habitat. Come up with scenarios to remove nests, and have the students migrate and see how it effects the duck population. If they

don't make it to a nest, they are a dead duck! Eg: "There was a big oil spill in a coastal wetland and it's too polluted to use!" (Remove a nest); "They decided to build a Costco on a protected wetland, on no!" (remove a nest); "Conservation groups came out and cleaned up the oil spill!" (replace one of the nests, allow more ducks to return), etc. The goal of this game is for students to understand the effects that humans have on animal populations when we destroy habitat.